

#141



WARREN
MAGAZINE

SEPT. 1982

CREEPY

\$6.50
\$9.95 (CAN.)

**A
WORLD IN
UPHEAVAL!
MADNESS
AND
MAYHEM
IN THE
RUINS
OF "THE
CHECKOUT
COUNTER!"**

**MORE!
GIANT
KILLER
BATS
ON THE
RAMPAGE
IN "MORAL
BLOOD!"**

**PLUS!
THE
MAN-MADE
MONSTER
LIVES!
"I CREATED
THE
GARGOYLE!"**



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SEPTEMBER 1982

AL SANCHEZ



PUPPET MASTER 17

CHECK-OUT

27

COVERING BASES 35

CANDLE IN WIND 46

MORAL BLOOD 59

The panicked horses pulled the stage at breakneck speed, but still the devilish beings overtook them...monstrous bats half the size of a human, tearing at man and horse alike with savage, soulless fury.

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Dear Uncle Creepy



When I thumbed through **CREEPY #138** in my local drugstore and saw all that fantastic art and mind-boggling sci-fi. I had to buy it! And the issue did not disappoint me.

"Derebitch," "Lamb to the Slaughter," and "Dreamworld" were my favorites in the issue, but what was the idea of printing "Cry of the Gipsies"? The name of your magazine is **CREEPY**, not **SPACE ADVENTURES**!

But then I came to understand why you would print a story like "Gipsies." You published it because you figure that science fiction and adventures in space are popular now, and that all the kids want to read it. Wrong, later breath. I buy **CREEPY** for all-out bone-tangling horror. If I want science fiction, there are plenty of magazines to buy or movies to see.

Stick to horror. That's what you do best.

H.G. HENDERSON
Woodstock, GA



CREEPY #138 was the best issue in a long time. Keep those horror and gory stories coming! Too many science fiction stories have been appearing lately.

"Lamb to the Slaughter" was my favorite story. Author John Jacobson wrote a story of horror and mystery, and Delando Nino's artwork served the story very well.

"Derebitch" started out beautifully with the mystery of the Graf Spee, but author Danielle DuBay must have run out of ideas, because the ending was a bit flat.

"Fools and Kings" managed to hold my interest, and no more. "Dreamworld" was my second favorite of the issue, mostly because of the bloody action. "The Cry of the Gipsies" was a mix of science fiction and horror. Normally, the two don't mix, but this time I liked it.

Keep up the good work. Keep the off yellow stripe down our backs.

CHRISTOPHER VANCE
Lake Jackson, TX



There were five stories in **CREEPY #138** and out of those five, three were easily forgettable. That's a pretty bad ratio for a magazine that purports to be a source of spine-tangling horror and adolescent nightmares. As a teenager I read **CREEPY** for some good down-to-earth scary stories and not for edification of pop art.

In the whole magazine there were only two stories that kept me in suspense and gave me a spattering of chills. "Cry of the Gipsies" was one of those ho-hum space stories **CREEPY** usually has, combining an implausible plot with weak imagination. "Dreamworld" told of things that practically happen every day—and such mundane matters are not the stuff from which horror is made. "Fools and Kings" read like a B-grade movie, its fairy tale ending violating the horror credo: never finish a horror story with a happy-ever-after ending.

Listen fellas, you're losing your touch, but I'm looking forward to some hopefully good **CREEPY** issues in the future.

HARRY PAPADOPULOS
Jackson Heights, NY

Huh?! "Fools and Kings" in **CREEPY #138** lost me at about the fourteenth plot twist. Gerry Boudreau kept piling surprise on top of surprise long past the point where anyone could care (or keep track).

At least the art was uncluttered—which is more than can be said of Delando Nino's "Lamb to the Slaughter." Still, Nino's wide-open art style is usually worth the confusion.

"Derebitch" featured some chilling moments, and an ending that took me by surprise. Fred Carrillo's art seemed to complement Danielle DuBay's plot perfectly.

"Dreamworld" and "Gipsies" were passable, but I'd like to see more than five stories per issue. By the law of averages, that means we'll get more excellent stories per issue.

R. SCIALUJATTA
Spokane, Wash.

Gerry Boudreau continues to be both busy and relatively successful within the pages of this mag; his two stories in #138 were the best of the issue. "Dreamworld" was a believable and chilling tale of the terrible results that can arise when a person who lives an artificial life drifts over into the everyday world. Believable, that is, until the last panel. That was unbelievable and ineffective; it confused the effects of something (TV, in this case) on already warped minds with those on stable ones.

The other two stories had little to recommend them. John Jacobson's "Lamb to the Slaughter" had a mesmerizing, confusing, and overlong plotline. Delando Nino really went to town in the gore dept. and his layouts were unnecessarily confusing, though he did not attain the heights of unintelligibility sometimes reached by his brother.

In "The Cry of the Gipsies," Dan Halliway obviously meant to come across with The Big Message, but he



couldn't seem to make up his mind what it was to be. It is also hard to come up with an affecting Message when the reader doesn't care about the story's characters and his 7-page effort left them as being mere ciphers.

I pick up #139 only to find that it's an all-reprint issue. Another one? So soon? Much as I admire Alex Toth's artistry, I'd still prefer to see some new material for two or three issues in a row, at least.

Oh well, at least I can turn to page 4 and read some new letters. But no, what's this? Creepy's Capricious Censor? Well, the information is appreciated, but the style seems just a little inappropriate. Marvel-Bull-penese circa 1968, I'd say.

Does this mean that the letters page is a goner? Is it too much to ask for a CCC page and a letters page? Will the same pattern repeat itself in other Warren mags?

T.M. MAPLE
Toronto, Ontario

GREETINGS,
CREEPY-FRIENDS!
YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU
GOT THIS ISSUE
AND THIS ISSUE WILL
BE GLAD TO GET
YOU...!

IT'S FULL
OF MAYHEM AND
MURDER, GARGOYLES
AND BATS AND UGLY
CRITTERS RUNNING
AMOK, COFFINS AND
HACKINGS... A MEGA-
DOSE OF SHOCK! THE
BURY-BEST IN
HORROR!

SO
PUT ASIDE YOUR
GRAVE RESERVATIONS
AND READ
ON!



I
CREATED
THE

GARGOYLE!

THE NIGHT WAS
LIKE ANY OTHER
ON THE DARK
DIRTY STREETS
OF NEW YORK
CITY THERE WAS
ONLY ONE
DIFFERENCE. A
MONSTER WAS
SLOWLY
VIOLENTLY
WENDING ITS
WAY UP
BROADWAY. A
MONSTER I HAD
CREATED.

AUN
MELISSA
THERE'S NOTHING
ANYONE CAN
DO TO STOP THAT
RAMPAGING MON-
STROSITY!



AFTER FOUR
LONG YEARS OF
BACKBREAKING
RESEARCH TO
FIND THE CURE
FOR CANCER, MY
GOOD FRIEND,
DR. ADAM
EASTMAN, AND I
WERE SUDDENLY
WITNESS TO A
MIRACLE!

OH,
MY GOD,
TOMMY!
LOOK!

WE'D BEEN WORKING WITH A
JERKUS MONKEY, BOMBARDING
IT WITH GAMMA RADIATION.
WHEN SUDDENLY, IT BEGAN TO
CHANGE!



THE CREATURE GREW MORE
GROTESQUE BY THE SECOND,
SPROUTING RAT-LIKE
LEATHERY WINGS!

I WAS CERTAIN THAT BOTH ADAM AND I
WERE ABOUT TO BE RIPPED TO BLOODY
SMARDS! INSTEAD, THE MONSTROSITY
MOMENTARILY WAVERED, THEN, WITH A
HOWLING WAIL OF PAIN-WRENCHING
RAGE...

IT SHUDDERED AND COLLAPSED, DEAD
AT OUR FEET!

WITH A ROARING
SURGE OF
POWER, IT BURST
THROUGH ITS
OBSERVATION
CHAMBER,
SPewing
SHATTERED GLASS
EVERYWHERE!

JEEZUS,
TOMMY! WHAT
HAPPENED?

BEFORE WE HAD A CHANCE TO INVESTIGATE THE PHENOMENON, ADAM'S FIANCÉE, GAIL, AWAKED...JUST AS SHE ALWAYS DID WHEN WE WERE WORKING TOO LATE FOR OUR OWN GOOD!

NEEDLESS TO SAY, SHE WAS AS SHOCKED, EXCITED AND FRIGHTENED AS WE WERE BY WHAT SHE SAW!

GOOD GOD! ADAM! TOMMY! WHAT...WHAT'S HAPPENED HERE? WHAT IS THAT THING?

THAT, BELIEVE IT OR NOT, BASE, IS POCKY!

YOUR MONKEY? B BUT NOW?

WE GAVE HER FIVE HUNDRED C.C.'S OF OUR ANTI-CANCER SERUM THEN BLASTED HER WITH TWO MINUTES OF RADIATION!

YET THE TRANSFORMATION WAS TOO RAPID TOO GREAT A STRAIN ON HER VITAL ORGANS!

BUT IF WE CAN ALTER LIVING CELLS TO THIS DEGREE, WE MAY SOON BE ABLE TO GENETICALLY PROGRAM CANCER CELLS OUT OF EXISTENCE!

OUR FORMULA, COUPLED WITH THE GAMMA RAYS MUST HAVE PHYSICALLY ALTERED HER CELLULAR STRUCTURE!

AS SHAKEN AS WE ALL WERE BY WHAT HAD HAPPENED, WE WERE ENCOURAGED, AS WELL! IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME, WE KNEW, BEFORE WE WERE ABLE TO CONTROL OUR FORMULA, AND USE IT TO BENEFIT ALL HUMANITY!

YET, EVEN THE MOST DEVOTED RESEARCH SCIENTISTS NEED A LITTLE TIME FOR FUN! THE NEXT NIGHT, ADAM, GAIL AND I WERE INVITED TO THE DEAN'S ANNUAL SUMMER RETREAT PARTY!

YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH HER, AREN'T YOU TOMMY?

HOW? YOU MEAN GAIL? DON'T BE SILLY, MRS. WILLIAMS! SHE'S ENGAGED TO MY BEST FRIEND!

I DOWED IT TO THE DEAN'S WIFE, OF COURSE! BUT THERE WAS LITTLE I COULD DO TO AIDE IT OR SUPPRESS MY ACHING LOVE FOR GAIL! I WAS ENVOIOUS AS WELL OF ADAM, BUT I COULD NEVER LET EITHER OF THEM KNOW MY TRUE FEELINGS!

YET... JUST SEEING THEM TOGETHER WAS EATING UP MY INSIDES!

GAIL! OH, GAIL! IF ONLY YOU KNEW HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU!

STILL, DESPITE MY HIDDEN PAIN, I HAD TO GO ON! ADAM AND I WERE TOO DEEPLY COMMITTED TO BREAK UP OUR WORKING RELATIONSHIP!

TOMMY! I'VE GOT IT! KNOW WHY OUR EXPERIMENTS HAVE ALL BEEN FAILURES!

WE'VE BEEN TRYING TO KILL HUMAN CANCER CELLS IN ANIMALS! BUT ANIMALS DON'T HAVE HUMAN CANCERS!

OUR SERUM WILL WORK JUST AS IT IS, IF ONLY WE USE A HUMAN SUBJECT!

GOD, NO, ADAM! WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?

WE'VE NO CHOICE! AND I'M THE ONE WHO HAS TO BE THE GUNNER PIG!

NO WAY! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!

BESIDES, YOU KNOW WE'RE TRYING TO ERADICATE CANCER! TO DO THAT, WE'D NEED A SUBJECT WITH... OH MY GOD, ADAM, YOU YOU DON'T-I!

NOW YOU KNOW MY SECRET, BUDDY! MY FANATICAL COMMITMENT TO THIS PROJECT ISN'T AS ALTRUISTIC AS YOU THOUGHT!

MY ONLY HOPE IS THE SUCCESS OF OUR SERUM!

MY HEART
WENT GUT TO
ADAM THEN
AND THERE!
DESPITE HOW
I FELT ABOUT
HIM AND GAIL,
I WANTED TO
HOLD HIM TO
MYSELF, AND
TO PROTECT
HIM FROM
THE
MURDEROUS
CELLS THAT
WERE
CHEWING HIS
INSIDES TO
PIECES!

INSTEAD... ALL
I COULD DO
WAS GIVE IN
TO HIS
WISHES, AND
PRAY THAT
OUR ANTI-
CANCER DRUG,
COUPLED WITH
THE
RADIATION
TREATMENTS
WOULD WORK!

DON'T
BE AFRAID,
TOMMY! TURN
IT UP FULL
BEAM!

ADAM:
OH GGG,
ADAM! WHAT
HAVE WE
DONE TO
YOU?

IT
CAN'T-I
AGHNN!

AAAAAEEEEEEEEE!

I SHUT DOWN THE
RADIATION
EQUIPMENT AS
QUICKLY AS I
COULD, AND
LITERALLY RUSHED
INTO THE
ISOLATION
CHAMBER!

ADAM!
N-NO! YOU
YOU'RE CHANGING!
JUST LIKE THE
MONKEY!

IT IS
GONE, TOMMY!
THE CANCER'S
GONE! I
CAN FEEL IT!
AGHNNNN!

HE WAS
DRENCHED IN
PERSPIRATION.
FINALLY, HE
LOOKED AT
ME. HIS LIPS
TREMBLING
AS HE TRIED
TO SPEAK!

I WATCHED, HELPLESS, AS MY BEST FRIEND
WRITHED ON THE LABORATORY FLOOR
SCREAMING FROM THE PAIN TEARING AT
THE INSIDE OF HIS BODY THEN JUST WHEN I
THOUGHT IT COULD GET NO WORSE...THE REAL
NIGHTMARE BEGAN!

I WATCHED IN MUTE HORROR AS ADAM'S BODY SLOWLY
BEGAN TO BULGE! HIS CLOTHING SPILT AT THE SEAMS AS
HUGE MUSCLES RIPPED ACROSS HIS BACK AND ARMS!
SUDDENLY, TINY BLACK WINGS BURST FROM BETWEEN HIS
SHOULDER, GROWING LARGER AND MORE OMINOUS WITH
EVERY PASSING SECOND!

ADAM
DON'T HAVE
ME COME TO
YOU

THEN, THE THING THAT MY BEST FRIEND HAD
BECOME, TURNED ITS AWESOME FACE TOWARD
MINE! FOR ONLY A MOMENT, I LOOKED INTO THE
GARGOYLE-LIKE MONSTROSITY'S MURDEROUS
EYES, AND KNEW THAT THIS CREATURE WAS NO
LONGER MY FRIEND!

THE BEAST ROARED THEN IN
SAVAGE, MINDLESS ANGER!
ADAM'S MIND WAS
OBVIOUSLY AS DEFORMED
AS HIS BODY!

ADAM!
NINOOO!
PLEASE!

WITHOUT WARNING, IT
LAWDED FOR ME...AND I KNEW
THEN THAT ADAM WANTED TO
KILL ME FOR MY PART IN HIS
HIDEOUS TRANSFORMATION!

I WAS TRAPPED... I KNEW I WAS ABOUT TO DIE! THEN, SUDDENLY, THE MIRACLE I'D BEEN PRAYING FOR SAVED ME FROM THE JAWS OF DEATH!

3-TOMMY!
OH MY GOD!

THE MONSTER ROARED WHEN IT SAW GAIL, AND FLAPPED ITS WINGS IN OBVIOUS RECOGNITION. THEN, WITH A MIGHTY SURGE OF STRENGTH, IT TURNED AND BURNED THROUGH THE LABORATORY WINDOW...

TAKING OUT HALF THE WALL AS IT FLED!

SCRASSSH!

I KNEW THEN THAT SOME TINY PART OF ADAM WAS YET ALIVE WITHIN THE MONSTROSITY AND THAT HE DIDN'T WANT THE WOMAN HE LOVED TO SEE HIM IN HIS GROTESQUE NEW FORM!

OH, TOMMY!
THANK GOD
YOU'RE ALL
RIGHT!

G-GAIL...
I'M SO
SORRY! SO VERY
...SORRY!

IT'S NOT
YOUR FAULT,
TOMMY! A-ADAM
HAD TO DO
IT!



AT LONG LAST, I HAD WHAT I'D LAIN AWAKE SO MANY NIGHTS PRAYING FOR! GAIL WAS FINALLY IN MY ARMS! YET IT WAS A BITTERSWEET VICTORY OVER MY RIVAL IN LOVE, ONE THAT I SIMPLY COULDN'T LIVE WITH, IF IT MEANT THAT MY LIFE-LONG FRIEND WOULD NEVER BE HUMAN AGAIN!

UNKNOWN TO ME, THE THING THAT ADAM HAD BECOME MEANWHILE SWOOPED THROUGH THE SKIES OF MIDDTOWN MANHATTAN, ITS GIANTIC WINGS SMASHING THROUGH SOLID STEEL AND CONCRETE! IT FELL TO THE STREET LIKE A PLUMMETING MOUNTAIN, RIPPING THROUGH ASPHALT AND CEMENT... DESTROYING THE VERY GROUND IT WALKED UPON!





THE THING THAT ONCE WAS A MAN SEEMED TO UNDERSTAND THAT IT WOULD NEVER BE A MAN AGAIN!

WITH THE UHM REALIZATION, AN OMINOUS DETERMINATION GRIPPED THE BEAST. AS THOUGH SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAD SWAPPED WITHIN ITS DEMENTED BRAIN! VOLUNTARY, DELIBERATELY, IT RIPPED ENTIRE FACADES FROM BUILDINGS... TORE THROUGH CONCRETE PAVEMENT AND HURLED AUTOMOBILES AS THOUGH THEY WERE MERELY PLAYTHINGS!

MIRACULOUSLY, NOT A SINGLE MAN, WOMAN OR CHILD WAS HURTY! IT WAS AS THOUGH ADAM WAS CAUSING DELIBERATE DESTRUCTION SO THE AUTHORITIES WOULD BE FORCED TO RELIEVE HIM OF HIS AWESOME PAIN!



BODW! BODW! BODW! BODA BODA BODA BODA

FRUSTRATED, DESPERATE, THE ABOMINATION THAT HAD, ONLY HOURS BEFORE, BEEN MY FRIEND, FLED INTO THE COMFORTING DARKNESS!

STILL... NOTHING... NOT THE HIGH-POWERED RIFLES OF THE NEW YORK POLICE, OR THE AUTOMATIC WEAPONRY OF THE NATIONAL GUARD COULD SO MUCH AS PENETRATE HIS ROCK-HARD HIDE!

BLAM! DAM! POW!

KRING!



GAIL AND I
MEANWHILE
FORGE THROUGH
THE STREETS IN
SEARCH OF THE
GROTESQUE
WE'D LOOSED
UPON THE
WORLD!

ITS WAKE OF
DESTRUCTION,
AS WELL AS THE
THROWING,
FRIGHTENED
CROWDS MADE
HIM...
TERRIFYINGLY
EASY TO FIND!

UP
THERE! LOOK ON
THE MANHATTAN
BADGE!

OH, TOMMY
WHAT CAN
WE DO?

GOD
WELL US,
GAIL, THERE'S
NOTHING WE
CAN DO.

KILL
IT!

STOP
IT BEFORE
IT BUTCHERS
US ALL!

DESTROY THE
MONSTER

THEN, THAT PART OF THE
CREATURE THAT WAS STILL
HUMAN SEEMED TO
RECOGNIZE THE HORROR AND
PITY IN OUR EYES!

SOMEHOW, IT
UNDERSTOOD
THAT THERE WAS
ONLY ONE THING IT
COULD DO!

WITHOUT HESITATION...WITH
ALL THE POWER IN ITS MIGHTY
BODY, THE BEAST LAUNCHED
FROM THE TOP OF THE
BRIDGE...ITS POWERFUL
WINGS PROPELLING IT.

TO
A
GRISLY,
BONE
CRUSHING
...DEATH!

GAIL
CLUNG
TO ME.
TEARS
STREAM-
ING
FROM
HER
EYES!

I-LOOK
OUT!

RUN!

IT
IT'S
GOING TO
KILL US
ALL!

KRASSHHHHH!

SHE KNEW THAT ADAM'S
SUFFERING WAS AT LONG LAST.
OVER IN A WAY, HE'D FOUND
THE CURE HE SOUGHT, BOTH
FOR HIS TORMENTING
CANCER...AND MY INSURABLE
LOVE FOR GAIL!

THE MONSTER HAD BEEN A LOT
MORE HUMAN THAN ANYONE
WOULD EVER KNOW!

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JACKIE MOROCO, A SHARK LOOSE IN THE SEA OF HUMANITY! AN INDIVIDUAL WHO EARN'S HIS LIVELIHOOD BY SHUFFING OUT THE LIVES OF OTHERS UPON THE COMMAND OF HIS GANGLAND MASTER! JACKIE MOROCO, A MAN WITHOUT CONSCIENCE, WHO COMMANDS FEAR FROM ALL SAVE.

NO, MR. MOROCO!
N-NO! I'LL PAY! I GOT IT! IT'S A-!

YER TOO LATE,
GREASEBALL! COLLECTION
DAY WAS YESTERDAY!

BAM!
BAM!

THE PUPPET MASTER

AFTER THIS,
THERE WON'T BE A SINGLE
SHOWKEEPER WHO'LL BALK
AT PAYIN' THE BOSS HIS
TAMBUZE!

FOR THERE'S NOT A SOUL ON MYNUPLE
STREET WHO HAS THE GUTS TO BOMBAL ON
THIS INHUMAN MONSTER!

THE STUPID GUINEA!
HE THOUGHT THAT THE BOSS
DON'T KNOW HE WAS TRYIN'
TO CONVINCE THE OTHER
MERCHANTS TO STOP PAYIN'
PROTECTION MONEY!

THE KILLER FEELS NO NEED TO
FLEE THE CRIME SCENE

O-GOOD
AFTERNOON,
M-MISTER
MOROCO!

YEAH
SURE TWIN,
POPS!

HE'S A SMART
MAN! HE KNOWS HIS
BETTERS WHEN HE
SEES EM!

JACKIE IS ON HIS WAY TO REPORT TO HIS BOSS,
WHEN 1



WONDER
WHAT THEM BRATS
ARE LAUGHIN' ABOUT?
MUST BE PRETTY
FUNNY...

HOOO-HA-HAY
HOOO-HA-HAY



LOOK
OUT, KID!
HERE COMES
THAT MEAN
MR. RAT!

"MUCK YUCKO"
IT LOOKS JUST LIKE
JACKIE MOROCCO

POI
LOOK
OUT!



THAT
AIN'T FUNNY,
YOU OLD CRAB!
YOU OUGHTA BE MORE
CAREFUL!

WATCH IT,
YA BUM! YET!
SCARIN' THE
KIDS!

THE
PUPPETMAN S
GONNA CATCH
IT NOW!

LET'S
SPLUT!



FORGET
ABOUT THEM LITTLE
MONSTERS

CAUSE
IN ABOUT ONE
SECOND I'M GONNA
PUT YER LIGHTS
OUT...!

YOU
DON'T
SCARE ME,
PUNK!



JACKIE!
TURN THE
OLD MAN
LOOSE!

WHO
THE HELL
IS-?



OH IT'S YOU!









JACKIE TAKES GARGOIRI'S CAR,
AND ?

THE BOSS KEPT
A PLANE READY AT A
PRIVATE FIELD IN CASE
HE NEEDED A FAST GUY.
AWAY! IT'S EXACTLY
WHAT I NEEDED TO GET
OUTTA TOWN!

DRIVING FURIOUSLY, THE
PLUTIVE KILLER REACHES THE
AIRFIELD, AND

GET THE PLANE
READY T'PLN THE CRIME
COMMISSION'S MOVIN' ON
THE ORGANIZATION!

WHAT
ABOUT THE
BOSS?

THEY ARRESTED HIM!
BUT WITHOUT THIS CASE,
THEY'LL HAVE TO RELEASE
HIM! WE GOTTA GET THIS
BAD OUTTA TOWN!

RIGHT!

THERE'S A BAD
STORM MOVING IN!
IT MIGHT GET ROUGH!

THERE'S AN
EXTRA GRAND IN THIS
FOR YOU IF WE MAKE
IT, PAL!

THE PILOT ACTS QUICKLY, AND THE PLANE IS SOON
AIRBORNE!

I'M
GOING TO
TRY TO FLY
OVER THESE
THUNDER-
HEADS!

DO THAT, PAL! WHEN
WE LAND, I'M GONNA HAVE
TO SNUFF YOU TOO!

SUDDENLY...

KRAK-KOON!

DAMN! OUR
TAIL'S BEEN
SHEARED OFF
BY LIGHTNING!
HANG ON!

I CAN'T
CONTROL IT!
USE YOUR
CHUTE! BAIL
OUT!



MOVE DAMMIT
MOVE!

THE
BOOKS!
MD!



HE MADE
ME LOSE THE
BOOKS! I'LL
KILL HIM IF
HE DOESN'T
BREAK HIS
NECK ON HIS
LANDING!



HEY!
WHAT'S
WROONG? I-
I'M BEING
PULLED
UP!

GOOD
GOD! ABOVE
YOU...!



THE
FRIGHTENED
GANGSTER
LOOKS UP TO
SEE: I

THE
PUPPETMANN
MOOOO! BUT
I KILLED
YOU!

YOU
DIDN'T THINK
I COULD
LEAVE WITHOUT
PERFORMING FOR
YOU ONE LAST
TIME, DID YOU,
SQUID?



JACKIE MORRIS, A KILLER
WHO DARED THINK
HIMSELF ABOVE THE LAWS
OF HUMANITY...

DANCE,
MY PUPPET!
DANCE!

A-WOOO!
PLEASE!

FINDS HIMSELF THE
VICTIM OF A GHOSTLY
JUDGMENT FROM BEYOND!

end

STAR TREK TRADING POST

LIFELIKE MASKS!

It's only logical to order the deluxe MR. SPOCK mask of durable latex (sorry no substituted rubber) with wood hair and eyes! And so star fleet commander will invade your space when you wear the KILGORN WARRIOR mask, gruesomely detailed with yuck hair and nose-stud-like scuffs! But there's a twist: he hides the pointy ears of the VULCAN MASTER, a face so convincing that friends will shun you for fear of the Vulcan death grip! Each professional-quality latex mask is realistically colored and fully detailed!



MR. SPOCK™
#02503951 \$5



KILGORN WARRIOR™
#025011501 \$6



VULCAN MASTER™
#025012536 \$5

HOBBY KIT HEAVEN!

You'll want to order a whole star fleet of these fantastic models! The ENTERPRISE is a full 22" long, with working sensor contraptions! The VULCAN CRUISER has a detachable passenger module! The KILGORN BATTLE CRUISER is 36" long! MR. SPOCK stands over 6" tall! All kits with display base, and vehicles feature dry transfer & plastic-etched (carbon detail) paint finishes. #02451144 \$4.50 KILGORN #02451145 \$5 VULCAN #02451146 \$5 MR. SPOCK #02451147 \$5



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Federation trials will fall these full-length adventures as the hottest thing since Vulcan arm-armor! "A Mirror For Futility," "The Three Stealers," "Fugitives of Spaceport," and "To Starve a Healer," all on a high-quality 33 1/3 RPM disc! Warning: do not play at Kromulon rock-n-roll!
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The Crier in Exile LP
The crew of the Enterprise is a tale of exciting adventures on a long-playing 33 1/3 RPM disc! You'll be on the edge of your seat for the "Passage to Mikkon," "The Crier in Exile," and drive in "In My No Veritas." High-quality recording, with the "Intro Lullaby"!
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An ideal way to get into Star Trek and your own star studded dreamland!
A go anywhere bag with reversible gold felt and separating covers! Lots of fully synthetic, tear-free fur without weight! Drawstring and see-thru vinyl/side bag! Covered with colorful action scenes from the Star Trek series! Don't sleep on it... and/or now!
#020957 \$23.95



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No Klingon girl would try to seduce you unless when you display this magnificent 22 x 34" model on your floor! One side features the Enterprise in full-color; the other side is a 3-D Klingon girl! 3-D glasses are included!
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BORIS VALLEJO



1983 FANTASY CALENDAR

The best thing about New Year's is that it gives you a chance to hang up a new Boris Vallejo calendar! And the master artist of the fantastic has outdone himself with his 1983 entry featuring more breathtaking landscapes, monstrous creatures and hunking heroes than ever! You'll treasure it next year and every year! #26326—\$5.95



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Here's a wall hanging... or hanging that will really get you blood up! It's Jonathan Frid as Barnabas Collins, bewitching star of Intertel's DARK SHADOWS. Measuring 24 1/2" x 31 1/2", this black and white poster will enhance the walls of any crypt or mausoleum! Hang it in the morgue and you'll really be laughing over "the approver" (Barnabas feels much more comfortable hanging upside down!) So start coffin up your dough and order as soon as possible, please! These things are scarce in the desert! BARNABAS POSTER #2515—\$2.50

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Features: break away window with remote lever and special platform and four die cast metal Luke and Darth Vader figures in action poses! #26345—\$11.90

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Side of Luke's famous light Saber duel with Vader! Remote lever and gantry door leads to rotating platform! Four die cast metal figures! #26346—\$11.90

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Perform death run into chamber! Bling claw takes out frozen figure! Movable ramp, stairs, elevator, escape hatch! 8 die cast metal figures! #26347—\$12.90

Special offer! All three interlocking Hoth World playsets for only \$55.95!

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Features: Luke's capture by the snow monster, Qui Han and Chewbacca, destroying the probe! Action blaster! 4 die cast metal figures! #26348—\$11.90

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Features: exploding generator and frozen Walker that stands unresistant and explodes by remote control! With 4 die cast metal figures! #26350—\$15.90

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Open shell by remote lever, 8 dials to simulate firing! Observer blower with blast doors, movable! Including 4 die cast metal figures! #26351—\$20.90

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Features: exploding cannon that opens and loads a deathtrapper manually operated bridge, removable slinger assembly and rope for swinging! Luke & Leia scores! 6 die cast metal figures! #26352—\$13.90

DEATH STAR COMPACTOR



Hand operated trash compactor with escape hatch that opens at last second! Remote operated blast door that springs shut, blast hatch to let 6 die cast metal figures jump into compactor! #26354—\$25.90

ESCAPE & COMPACTOR



Both interlocking Death Star World playsets—the Escape and the Compactor—available at one bargain price! Can be used together or separately! Including 11 die cast metal figures! #26355—\$39.95

IN THE ERA FOLLOWING THE NUCLEAR WAR, THE FEW SURVIVORS SEARCH THE RUINS FOR FOOD...AND GLASS TO MAKE MOPS OF ROPE!

LEGENDS SPEAK OF A WONDERFUL LAND OF GREEN AND JOYFULTY, WHERE NO MAN NEED FEEL HUNGER OR RAIN! MEN WHO KNOW THE TRUTH OF THE LEGEND ARE HARD TO FIND!

THE CHECK-OUT COUNTER

NOT MUCH
I EAT MEAT BOY!
WE'RE DOWN TO SPAM
OUTLETS! TIME TO GO
TO EDEN AGAIN! BUT
THIS TIME, YOU'RE
GOING IN WITH
ME!

REALLY,
BUT DO YOU
MEAN IT?

NEITHER
OF YA MOVE
OR I'LL
BLDY YA IN
TWO!

FOOT
ARE YOU
THE MAN
THEY CALL
PLATTSBY
SPEAK
UP!

NO!

Y-YES!

WORD OUT OF PHILLY
IS THAT YOU KNOW WHERE A
PLACE CALLED THE GARDEN OF
EDEN IS WE BEEN LOOKIN'
FOR YOU FOR A YEAR!

OH HEAVY! YOU'RE
GONNA TELL US WHERE IT
IS. OR-I

WHAT
I DOWE?

I-PLEASE... I
MAY "GARD" M-HEART
... "WUD" I

YOU
MUST HAVE
THE WROD MAN
SIR! I KNOW OF
NO GARDEN OF
EDEN!

I THINK THE
IDEA WAS TO KEEP
IM ALIVE!

RIGHT?

HE
HE'S
DEAD!

YOW, BOY
... YOU KNOW
RANSOM THIS
EDEN IS?

YOU'RE
GONNA TAKE US
THERE!

STORMS SAY THIS
EDEN PLACE HAS ENOUGH
FOOD T' FEED THE WORLD!
FRESH N' COOL! PEACHES
N' EGGS N' MEATS NICE
CREAM. MAKE A GUY
BLGAT AN' THROW UP AN
ALL THAT GOOD STUFF!
THAT TRUE, BOY?

HE AIN'T
TALKIN' TO
YOU! YOU AIN'T
HIS BUDDY.
MEMBER?

I KILLED
YER WIFE. AN'
YOU TALK TO
ME.

THAT WAS
DIFFERENT! WE WAS
STARVIN'!

THERE IT
IS! GET IT!

OH YEAH
FRESH
WAT!

YOU GOT ANY
KINDLING IN THAT BACK
O'YERS, BOY? GIMMA!
NEED A FIRE!

JUST
PAPER MONEY!
BUT FURRTS
SAY I SHOULD
KEEP IT!

KEEP
IT FOR WHATT?
GIVE IT HERE,
DUMBIO!

KEEP
IT...NA!
THAT OL' MAN
MUSTA BEEN
SENILE!

ON THE THIRD DAY OF THEIR TREK...!

SEVERAL HOURS LATER...!

I'VE
BROKEN
THROUGH!

THIS IS
THE PLACE!
FIRST WE'VE
GOT TO CLEAR
THESE ROCKS
OUT OF THE
WAY...!

WHADAYA
MEAN 'WE'?
YOU CLEAR, WE
SUPERVISED!

HOW'S IT
LOOK...?

SURE DON'T
LOOK LIKE NO
PARADISE! YOU
FIRST, KID!

THERE
AIN'T NOthin'
IN HERE!

KID, IF YOU
BEEN PULLIN' OUR CHAINS
TILL...! WAIT! MYAZZAT!
LIGHTS! NOISE!

MY DADDY

ENTRANCE

IT'S FREAKIN'
WONDERFUL...!

SUDDENLY, THE SUN RISES OVER EDEN! THE MUSIC OF THE ANGELS BLARES FORTH! THE GATES OF PARADISE SWING WIDE TO ADMIT THE STARTLED SCAVENGERS!



LEO OF LAMB!
BREAK!
OF CHICKEN!
LIVER!

KIDNEY
BEANS! FLANK
STEAK! EGGS!
RIBS!



WE CAN
STUFF OURSELVES
FOR THE REST OF
OUR LIVES!

WE CAN
TRADE FOOD
FOR DOPPE N' GUNS
N' WOMEN! EASY
STREET!



HEY!
WHAT'RE
THE GATES
FOR?

WE'RE
TRAPPED!

NEXT!



WE'RE
RICH YOU KNOW
THAT?

HUNGRY
NO MORE.
FILL!



AND WE'LL BE
THE ONLY ONES IN THE
WORLD WHO KNOW ABOUT
EDEN... AFTER WE SNUFF
THE KID!



ARE YOU
TOGETHER?

WH-WHAT THE
SAM HELL'S GOIN'
ON HERE?





CLIMB PEACHES AND PIG'S KNUCKLES! YOURS COMES TO \$78.88!

I'M AFRAID YOU'RE SHORT \$3.00!

I'LL PUT SOMETHING BACK...!

LET'S SEE! THE FOMQUE YOU SELECTED IS PRICED AT ABOUT \$3.00!

KCHINK! BUST!

W-HERE SRI TAKE IT! IT'S ALL THAT I GOT!

TOO LATE!

M-WOOO!



LEGENDS SPEAK OF A WONDERFUL LAND OF GREEN AND BOUNTY, WHERE NO ONE NEED FEEL HUNGER OR WANT!

LET THE LEGENDS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES! THE MEN THAT KNOW THE TRUTH...AREN'T TALKING!

entertainment

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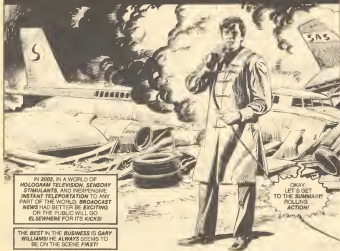


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you're the monster! #21403-\$2.50

COVERING ALL BASES









BUT THEN CARLO REALIZES THE OPENING OF THE POWERPLANT THAT WILLIAMS IS COVERING HAPPENED ONLY YESTERDAY! HE O KILLED HIM THREE DAYS BEFORE!



"WAIT A MINUTE... AM I GOIN' NUTS? IT WAS DARK, BUT I SAW THE GUY SAW HIM GOOD! I LIKE TO LOOK AT MY WCFMS AS THEY'RE DYING! IT WAS HIM FOR SURE!"



HE COULDN'T BE ALIVE! AT LEAST NOT IN ONE PIECE!

CARLO'S PROFESSIONAL REPUTATION IS AT STAKE!



WMM NEW MEDIA CENTER OPENS IN MANTOVA! SOUNDS LIKE THE TYPE OF THING WILLIAMS MIGHT COVER



YOU LOOK LIKE YOU GOT GYPSIESMA HAGG! WHAT'S UP?

I HAD INTERPOL PUT A TAIL ON WILLIAMS! LOOK AT THIS!



WE'VE GOT REPORTS FROM FIVE DIFFERENT SECTIONS. IN THIS CITY AND ELSEWHERE! EVERY OPERATOR HAD WILLIAMS IN HIS SIGHT EVERY MINUTE!

SO?

ALL AT THE SAME TIME?



AFTER SEVERAL MINUTES OF BLAZING COMBAT...!

HOLD YOUR FIRE! I'M COMING OUT... I'M THROWING AWAY MY GUN...!

ARE YOU CRAZY, BOY? HE'LL KILL YOU!

WHY THE HELL CAN'T YOU STAY DEAD, WILLIAMS?

IT IS AT THIS POINT THAT THE CAVALRY SHOULD APPEAR OVER THE RIDGE TO SAVE THE DAY BUT CAVALRY MAKES AN AWFUL LOT OF NOISE... AND THE IDEA HERE IS TO AVOID THE AUTOMATIC CAMERAS!

ALL CARLO HEARS IS THE CLUCK OF THE SAFETY...

AND ONE VERY LOUD REPORT...AND HE HEARS NO MORE!

CRACK!

THE POLICE AND THE MEDIA ARRIVE AT THE SAME TIME... AND TAKE THE DESCRIPTION OF THE BATTLE THAT HAS OCCURRED FROM MISTER FOOT!

BUT THAT LAST SHOT...WHAT HAPPENED?

IT...IT MUST HAVE BEEN A MISCHANCE! IT HAPPENED SO FAST, YOU SEE!

TELL US, OFFICER...WHO FIRED THAT LAST SHOT?

WELL, THERE'S NOBODY'S PRINTS ON THE GUN BUT WILLIAMS!



WOULD, IN THEORY, NEVER LEAVE WHERE IT STARTED SO THERE WAS A DUPLICATE RUNNING AROUND. LOOKING LIKE ME THINKING LIKE ME!

WHEN I SAW A WAY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE, I CREATED MANY MONEY, RIGHT?

CHECK!

WE NEEDED A JOB THAT WOULD SUPPORT US AND THAT COULDN'T CATCH US ALL IN THE SAME PLACE AT ONCE! THE NEWS JOBS HAD BEEN OFFERED BEFORE, SO WE SIMPLY ACCEPTED TWELVE OF THE BETTER ONES, SPREAD OUT THE TERRAIN A LITTLE. AND MADE A MANOLET!

BUT WE NEVER EXPECTED ONE OF US TO GET KILLED!

WAIT A MINUTE! I CAN GET YOU FOR INCOME TAX EVASION! YEAH!

BUT FIRST, YOU'D HAVE TO FIGURE OUT WHICH ONE OF US PAID HIS TAXES, AND WHICH SHOULD GO TO JAIL!

AND SINCE ONE OF US LIVES IN PARADISE, YOU CAN'T GET EXTRA FROM! COULD YOU DISTINGUISH HIM FROM US? PITY. NO CASE!

THEY'VE COVERED ALL THE BASES, THINKS POOR INSPECTOR HAGGIES AND HAVE ROOM TO SPARE! HE IS JUST GLAD THEY'VE TAKEN UP SOMETHING LEGAL!

BUT THERE IS SOMETHING YOU CAN HELP US WITH!

WHAT IS IT?

IT'S AN INVITATION TO THE FAMILY GET-TOGETHER AND SOFTBALL GAMES! WE'D LOVE TO HAVE YOU!

PROVIDED THAT IS THAT YOU CAN PITCH BETTER THAN WE CAN!

45

prologue

MY NAME IS ARVID CARPENTER. I HAVE, FOR THE PAST FOUR YEARS, LIVED IN SUNSET ESTATES, A RESPECTABLE THOUGH UNASPIRING PULLED-UP WITH ALL THE PROBLEMS AND ADVANTAGES OF A CONTEMPORARY SUBURB.



MY INCOME AS A GENERAL PRACTITIONER IS CONSIDERABLE TO COMFORTABLE LIVING, THOUGH IN THESE TIMES, WE COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED OPALENT. MY EIGHT-YEAR MARRIAGE TO MY WIFE, ROBIN, HAS BEEN A RELATIVELY HAPPY ONE.



I AM NO DIFFERENT, IN MOST RESPECTS, FROM THOUSANDS OF OTHER DOCTORS OF COMPARATIVE AGE AND ABILITY.

SO WHY, GENE PINCHOT CHOOSE TO BRING HIS TROUBLES TO MY DOORSTEP, I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND.



WHAT IS YOUR NAME PLEASE?



MY NAME IS PINCHOT AND I...

THAT WAS ALL HE HAD TIME TO SAY BEFORE HIS ENTIRE BODY AGITATED LIKE A ROMAN CANDLE, AND THE ROOM STANK WITH THE ODOR OF BURNING FLESH.



IN MY YEARS AS A PRACTICING PHYSICIAN, THERE WAS LITTLE IN THE WAY OF HUMAN PAIN AND SUFFERING THAT I HADN'T SEEN! BUT NOTHING IN THE FURTHEST REACHES OF MY IMAGINATION COULD HAVE PREPARED ME FOR THE SHOCKING SIGHT I HAD WITNESSED THIS NIGHT!

UPON EXTINGUISHING THE FLAMES, WE IMMEDIATELY CONTACTED SHERIFF ARNOLD MOSES! WHEN HE ARRIVED, LITTLE REMAINED FOR HIS EXAMINATION BUT BOWE AND ASH!

CANDLE WIND



USED TO BE A WIND IN THE CITY BY THAT NAME, BUT I AIN'T SEEN HIM IN THESE PARTS FOR MONTHS NOW!

YOU'LL HAVE TO COME DOWNTOWN WITH ME AND TRY TO IDENTIFY HIM FROM MUG SHOTS!



YOU SAY HE GAVE HIS NAME AS GENE PINGCHOT?



HAVE YOU ANY IDEA WHAT MADE HIS BODY KNIFE?

CAN'T BE CERTAIN YET! PROBABLY SOME TYPE OF INCENDIARY DEVICE!

I ALSO WANT YOU TO GO THROUGH THE FILE OF KNOWN PROGRAMMERS! PERHAPS WE'LL FIND A CLUE TO CONNECT ONE OF THEM WITH PINGCHOT!

I SPENT THE AFTERNOON PORING THROUGH BOOKS OF PHOTOGRAPHS, UNTIL THE
FACES BECAME MOST FAMILIAR. THE VICTIM HAD INDEED BEEN THE WHO MOSES
BROKE OF, BUT THERE WAS NO INDICATION AS TO THE IDENTITY OF HIS KILLER.

AS EVENING SET IN, I DROVE TO
THE HOSPITAL FOR THREE
HOURS OF DUTY.



BY TEN O'CLOCK I WAS EAGER TO
GET OUT FOR HOME IN THE
PARKING LOT I SAW JEAN REISER,
A SOMEWHAT FLIGHTY NURSE.

SUDDENLY

GOOD
NIGHT, DR
CARREN
TBY

AAAAAEEEEEE!
HELLEPPPI!

THAT'S
JEAN'S
VOICE!

THE NIGHT DRAGGED INTERMINABLY.
FORTUNATELY MY SERVICES WERE
NOT URGENTLY NEEDED, FOR I FOUND
CONCENTRATION DIFFICULT, AND MY
MIND HAD A TENDENCY TO WANDER.



IT WAS LIKE A WAKING, RECURRENT NIGHTMARE... FOR
SUDDENLY THE ATTACKER BURST INTO FLAMES!



AGAIN, I CALLED SHERIFF MOSES, DOING MY BEST TO CALM JEAN IN THE INTERIM. BY THE TIME HE ARRIVED, SHE WAS MORE COMPOSED THAN I



ANY IDEA WHO YOUR ATTACKER WAS, MS. WEISBERG?

YES, SHERIFF. I RECOGNIZED HIM!

HIS NAME IS DELMAR PALARKY! HE WAS A PATIENT OF MINE SEVERAL MONTHS BACK! EVEN THEN, I REMEMBER, HE STARED AT ME WITH A CREEPY, PERVERTED LOOK...

CIRRHOSIS OF THE LIVER! HE HAD A HEAVY DRINKING PROBLEM!

WHAT ABOUT THIS MAN? DOES HE LOOK FAMILIAR?

THAT'S MR. PINCHOT! I TOOK CARE OF HIM NOT MORE THAN THREE WEEKS AGO!

WHAT WAS HE TREATED FOR?

AND HIS PROBLEM?



SAME THING! CIRRHOSIS OF THE LIVER!

DO YOU SEE A PATTERN EMERGING, OR CARPENTER?

OF COURSE, BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT SIGNIFICANCE IT COULD HAVE!

NOR DO I! BUT I'M CERTAIN IF WE PROBE DEEP ENOUGH, WE WILL UNCOVER SOME CONNECTION!



THE ACY DRAWL AND THE ARROGANT SMILE BROUGHT TO MY MIND THE REASONS WHY I NEVER PARTICULARLY LIKED SHERIFF ARNOLD MOSES!





THE SECTION OF TOWN WHERE JENNIE SMITH WAS BORN AND LIVED WAS CALLED FOX POINT! I FOUND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THAT IT COEXISTED ON THE SAME PLANET, MUCH LESS IN THE SAME CITY, AS SUNSET ESTATES!



OF COURSE! DIDN'T YOU KNOW? JENNY DIED OF A DRUG OVERDOSE LAST WEEK!



IF THE LAW WANTED
TO DO ANY GOOD FOR JENNY,
THEY SHOULD HAVE DONE IT WHILE
SHE WAS ALIVE! SO DON'T
COME AROUND PRETENDING SHE
MATTERS TO YOU NOW! IT'S
A LITTLE TOO LATE FOR
ALL OF US!



SUDDENLY I

MAMA M-MAMA
YOU GOTTA HELP
ME MAMA. I'M
S-SICK...

JENNY! OH
MY SWEET GOD
--JENNY!

WHAT?!



JENNY SMITH, HER DEAD EYES PLEADING,
REACHED TOWARD HER MOTHER WHO SHOOK
AWAY, EYES WIDE WITH FEAR. I



THEN, A SUDDEN, INCANDESCENT BURST CONSUMED JENNY SMITH.



AN
EXTINGUISHER
NEAR THE STOVE
CLICKED!

THIS TIME,
WE MANAGED TO
SAVE THE BODY BEFORE
IT WAS TOTALLY
DESTROYED!

I WOULDN'T
STAKE MY REPUTATION
ON IT, BUT AFTER A
QUICK EXAMINATION I
WOULD SAY

JENNY HAS
BEEN DEAD AT LEAST
A WEEK...

IMPOSSIBLE!
WE ALL SAW HER
WALKING!



FLUTTERINGLY, I FELT A WAVE
OF SORROW FOR MRS. SMITH.
AFTER ALL, NOTHING COULD
HAVE PREPARED HER FOR THE
SIGHT SHE WAS FORCED TO
WITNESS!

WALKING...
PERHAPS! ALIVE... NO!
CELL DEGRADATION
SUGGESTS THAT DEATH
OCCURRED AT LEAST A
WEEK AGO!



ZOMBE!

NO, MRS. SMITH, WHAT KEPT JENNY ALIVE WAS NOT MAGIC... BUT SCIENCE!

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, CARPENTER?



I'LL TELL YOU ON THE WAY BACK TO THE HOSPITAL!

MRS. SMITH, I KNOW APOLOGIES ARE MEANINGLESS, BUT THERE'S ONE THING TO LIKE YOU TO THINK ABOUT!



WHOEVER DID THIS TO JENNY WAS TRYING TO SAVE HER. HE FAILED MISERABLY, BUT SOMEONE CARED!



THE ONLY WOMAN MRS. SMITH SAID THROUGH HER TEARS WAS 'GOODBYE'! IT WAS ENOUGH TO LET ME KNOW SHE UNDERSTOOD!

NOW WOULD YOU MIND TELLING ME WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT?

ADVANCED RADIOLOGY, SHERIFF!

MY THEORY IS THIS: ALL THREE VICTIMS OF THESE MYSTERIOUS BURNINGS WERE DEAD BEFORE WE EVEN SAW THEM. THEY PROBABLY DIED IN CITY HOSPITAL!



BUT THE RECORDS SUPPLY WOULD HAVE SHOWN THIS: THERE'S NO WAY A DEATH CAN GO UNNOTICED IN A HOSPITAL!



DID YOU NOTICE HOW CLEAN THESE FILES WERE, COMPARED TO THE OTHERS? MY GUESS IS THAT SOMEONE REMOVED THE ORIGINALS AND COPIED THEM, LEAVING OFF ANY MENTION OF DEATH!



WHY?

TO EXPERIMENT WITH ADVANCED RADIOLOGY TECHNIQUES! SOMEONE WAS USING RADIOACTIVE PARTICLES TO KEEP PATIENTS ALIVE BEYOND THE MOMENT OF DEATH!



AS TO THE BURNINGS... WHOEVER WAS CONTROLLING THE EXPERIMENT WASN'T SURE ABOUT THE DOSAGE! THE VICTIMS' SYSTEMS OVERLOADED, CAUSING A SORT OF SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION!

THE QUESTION NOW IS... WHO?



A FINGERPRINT CHECK WILL TELL US WHO COPIED THE FILES!

DON'T FORGET WE'VE HANDLED THEM ANY PRINTS THAT MAY HAVE EXISTED WILL BE SMUGGED!



WE KNOW THAT, BUT OUR KILLER DOESN'T!



WARREN POSTERS



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prologue



THEY SAY HE CAME INTO CEMETARY CREEK
IN THE LATE SUMMER OF '82



TALK WAS HE CALLED
HIMSELF SIDEWINDER!

HE DIDN'T BOTHER WITH NO
OTHER NAME!

HE WASN'T THE TYPE TO
ASK NOBODY ELSE'S
NAME. NOR LISTEN TO
THEIR GAB IF HE WASN'T OF
A MIND TO!



TO LOOK AT HIM, FOLKS SWORE, YOU KNOW RIGHT OFF
WHY HE'D PICKED THAT MONICKER, SIDEWINDER! YOU
NEVER KNEW WHICH WAY HE WAS GOING TO STRAY!

THEY SAY HE CAME IN ON THE 8-10 STAGE FROM TUCSON
WAY THE STORY GOES, IT WAS ALSO THE SAME NIGHT THE
8-10 NEVER MADE IT!



SLIM HEARD THE SAUKE OF THE HORSES AND TURNED TO LOOK. AND RUDDILY SOMETHING WAS TEARING AT HIS FACE!



THE HORSES TWISTED WILDLY, TRYING TO BRISK PRIZE THEIR EYES AND GULLING HORNS BEHIND UNREASONING PANIC!



THE STAGE SWAYED AND SUGGED AND S'LIMITED UNDER THE GRASPING TALONED FINGERS... AND THE AIR WAS THICK WITH MADLY HURLING SHADOWS!



VERED, MAMMOTH WINGS SWEEP WIDE TO A SPREAD OF EIGHT FEET! THEY CAUGHT THE NIGHT WIND AND ASSED THEIR MATHS TO THE SKY!



SIDEWINDER AIMED THE CLASSIC PEACEMAKER 45 AS THE COACH DISSOLVED IN A MIXTURE OF DARK GREY SMOKE AND A SPRAY OF BLOODY FLAGST!

HE FIRED ONCE, AND ONE OF THE ORANGE RED EYES DISSOLVED IN A MIXTURE OF DARK GREY SMOKE AND A SPRAY OF BLOODY

THE BLACK POWDER CARTRIDGE ERUPTED WITH A FLAME THAT SPREAD ACROSS THE NARROW, BRILLIANT FACE OF LEATHER... AND FOR A MOMENT, SEEMED TO DISSOLVE THAT HIDEOUS RICTUS GRIN!

THE SNEWY
FORM CRASHED
ONTO HIM, ITS
WINGS BEATING
WILDLY, ITS
HORRIBLE JAWS
PEERING BACK
AND SNARLING!

IT REEKED OF
DAMP EARTH AND
SOOTY DECAY...AN
INVADING,
DISTURBING
SCENT OF
DEATH!

ITS REMAINING
ORANGE-RED EYE
SKIMMERED HIM
PASSIONLESSLY...
A PEER INTO
THE LOWER
DEPTHS OF
HELL!



SIDEWINDER TWISTED AND AGGLED,
TRYING TO BREAK FREE, AND
SUDDENLY THE STAGE WAS SWEEPED
OUT FROM UNDER HIM!



HE HUNG SUSPENDED A MOMENT
AND THEN WAS DROPPED WITH A
HARSH JOLT AGAINST THE
JAGGED ROCKS!



SILENCE FELL FOR ONE AWFUL
INSTANT...

KKRASH!



WHEEL!

AWW?

WEEECH?

WEEECH?

THE STREETS OF CEMETARY CREEK WERE RIFE WITH THE SMELL OF HORSES' WASTE, HORSES NOT BEING PARTICULAR AS TO WHERE OR WHEN THEY'D DROP A LOAD, WHETHER OUTSIDE THE SHifty VULTURE EMPORIUM AND SALOON WHILE TETHERED, OR IN THE MIDDLE OF MAIN STREET AND THE COMMERCE CENTER, OF WHICH THE UNDERTAKER DID MOST OF THE COMMERCING; IT MADE NO NEVER MIND TO A HORSE!



THE TOWN HIRING A PUBLIC SERVANT OF LITTLE WIT TO PILE IT UP AT ONE END OF TOWN, AND THE DUNG HEAP BECAME A CONVENIENT SIGNPOST FOR GIVING DIRECTIONS IN THE HUNDRED-PLUS DEGREE WEATHER OF JULY. YOU COULDN'T MISS IT! IT WAS MORE THAN ENOUGH TO ROUSE A SUN-BLISTERED, BADLY WOUNDED MAN FROM HIS WAKING FEVER DREAMS!



NO STUMBLING OR STAGGERING OR TREMBLING FINGERS... NO LOW MOANS OF PAIN BETRAYED THE ORdeal THAT THE MAN CALLED SIDEWINDER HAD ENDURED THAT DAY!



A STOPPED VALERIE HELD COURT OVER THE ROOM. ITS GLASSY EYES CAPTURING A SWIFTNESS OF SPIRIT UNUSUALLY IT DOMINATED THE RESIN-STAINED WALLS. THE UNWARNISHED BAR OF FRESHLY-HEWN WOOD.

THE HEAVY FARM TABLE BRIGHTENED BY THE LURID COLORS OF A RESIDENT "SOLED DOVE" THE BLACK, UNUSED STOVE WAITING FOR WINTER, THE ADS FOR SHOOTING IRONS DONE WITH GRAND SUNSETS AND MONUMENTAL VISTAS POPULATED WITH MEN OF HEROIC DIMENSIONS!









THE TIMBERED PAVINE HAD FALLEN TO THE AXE AND SAW! THE STUMPS OF ASPEN AND PINE WERE DARK, LIFELESS
 SPYGLASS NEVER READ ON UNDERSTOOD!



I DRIFTED DOWN
 HERE FROM MONTANA! BEEN
 ON THE OTHER SIDE
 OF THE LAW MORE N I'VE
 BEEN WITH IT!

MIGHT SAY I
 BEEN WHERE YOU ARE,
 MISTER, AN' LIKE AS NOT BE
 BACK THERE AFTER THIS
 JOB IS OVEN



RATHER DO WHAT
 I DO! LIVE ON MY WIT
 AN' TALENT!

WE AN' THE SHELLS,
 WE BEEN TRAVELIN' AROUND
 WITH THE LITTLE PEA FOR
 WHILE! KEEP IT COMPANY,
 YOU MIGHT SAY!



SAVE
 YOUR BREATH,
 BOY! YOU
 AIN'T GONNA
 LIKE WHAT
 YOU'RE BOUT
 TO SEE!



FLIES BUZZING... THE HELLISH SOUND
 BECKONED THE MEN TO THE
 CARNAGE...!

AS THE HORRIFIED TOWNSMEN GAZED ON THE SHREDDED BODIES AND THE SMATTERED CARGO BAKING IN THE SUN



THEY REALIZED THAT THEIR ISOLATED, FRAIL LITTLE TOWN... AND THEIR EQUALLY FRAIL LIVES...
 WERE IN THE GRIP OF AN INCOMPREHENSIBLE, UNEARTHLY AND INESCAPABLE HORROR!

TO BE
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